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MOORE SQUARE SOUTH DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY REPORT

(Draft September 13, 2004)

**A Raleigh Downtown Livable Streets
Residential Initiative**

City of Raleigh, North Carolina

**Planning Department
And
Community Development Department**

**Consultant
JDavis Architects, PLLC**

CONTENTS

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE	1 - 1
DEVELOPMENT APPROACH	1 - 3
Urban Form / Design	
Land Use	
Residential Program / Target Market	
Streetscape and Pedestrian Circulation	
DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS FOR PROJECT SITES	3 - 7
Project Site One – Block A	
Project Site Two – Block B	
Project Site Three – Block C	
Project Site Four – Block D	
Project Site Five – Block E	
OVERALL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY	7 - 10
ACTION ITEMS	11 - 11
<u>MAPS</u>	
MAP 1:	STUDY AREA CONTEXT MAP
MAP 2:	AERIAL MAP
MAP 3:	CITY OWNERSHIP
MAP 4:	ILLUSTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
MAP 5:	OVERALL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
MAP 6:	HOUSING OPTIONS
MAP 7:	BLOCK A
MAP 8:	BLOCK B
MAP 9:	BLOCK C
MAP 10:	BLOCK D Phase 1
MAP 11:	BLOCK D Phase 2
MAP 12:	BLOCK E
MAP 13:	OPEN SPACE PLAN

I. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

This item is a follow up action in response to Livable Streets Downtown Plan recommendations to explore opportunities for strengthening the residential character of downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, and to strengthen pedestrian connections to them. (Map 1) The City of Raleigh Planning Department and Community Development Department initiated this study in 2003 to determine a strategic and comprehensive development approach focusing on City-owned properties within the seven-block study area located east of the City's Downtown Core. (Map 3) Over many years, a number of parcels were acquired with federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and City housing bond funds for the purpose of preventing or eliminating slums and blight and/or principally benefiting low- and moderate-income persons. Future use of this land must be sensitive to these local and national objectives. The purpose of this study is to provide an overall strategy to regenerate a residential neighborhood in the Moore Square South area. This study is intended to provide the following:

- Provide the City with a better understanding of the constraints and opportunities offered by this area with regard to the potential development of the City-owned properties, including the A-21 site (Carlton Place) for residential purposes.
- To strengthen the physical connection between the Downtown Core and residential neighborhoods east of the Moore Square South district.
- To determine the most appropriate development approach for the City-owned properties that can serve as a catalyst for private sector housing initiatives.

During the preparation of the Moore Square South Development Strategy, the City Staff and the consultant, JDavis Architects, conducted a series of meetings with property owners, private developers, the Citizen Advisory Councils of the affected areas, and the community at large to explore development options and development strategies for the overall district and for specific project sites. In some cases, the development options consider the combination of City and privately owned parcels to explore the potential benefits of larger and more complex development opportunities.

II. DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

Individuals active in land development in downtown Raleigh were interviewed to gain informal input on the development potential and to assess market demand for residential use within the study area. A composite summary, of the key market related and urban design issues identified by the private development community, was compiled to create the basis for a recommended development program. These program elements were also used to form site-specific individual development strategies and site/building development options for each project site. It is acknowledged that any number of alternative development approaches may also be successfully applied to individual project sites.

A. Urban Form / Design

- Buildings to define street edges, particular emphasis on E. Davie Street
- Medium to high residential densities are preferred
- Parking in structural decks, and below buildings wherever possible, or surface parking interior block placement
- Higher density to lower density transition, from west to east and north to south
- Incorporate well-designed pedestrian access, parking, open space and streetscapes
- Innovative/contextual architectural design solutions
- A variety of housing types and price levels, including units within reach of moderate-income buyers.

B. Land Use

- Primarily attached residential uses
- Limited retail and office demand
- Church expansion
- Promote institutional uses where appropriate

C. Residential Program / Target Market

- Singles, couples, and small families as primary market
- Downtown employee market
- Primarily one and two bedroom units
- For sale units @ \$100-140k ranging up to \$250k
- 1 br @ 600 – 800 sf / 2 br @ 950 – 1200 sf
- Parking ratio at one space per unit minimum.

D. Streetscape and Pedestrian Circulation

- Establish a strong retail frontage along Blount Street and East Davie Street.
- Create a series of safe urban spaces, courtyards and pedestrian linkages between and within each development block.
- Implement a streetscape plan for E. Davie Street between Fayetteville Street and Chavis Way as the primary active link between the Downtown Core and the neighborhoods east of Downtown.
- Capitalize on the City's investment in the Chavis Greenway by offering residential opportunities on City-owned properties overlooking the greenway.

Portions of seven city blocks were identified for evaluation with regard to development potential. A specific site analysis and development program was considered for each of the project sites. The City wholly owns some of the project sites, while other sites include both private and City-owned properties requiring a coordinated development approach to maximize development potentials. There is no assumption made in this study that private property owners are in agreement or support the specific development recommendations made for their properties.

The study recommendations are made to reflect development potential assuming that comprehensive coordinated development plans will be realized for the properties. Only when the City and private property owners see a common benefit, and when a common investment opportunity is available, will any of the joint development concepts be realized. The City may also choose to move ahead with development projects on City-owned properties that may or may not include the acquisition or inclusion of additional properties. The City has the power of eminent domain as may be needed to acquire additional strategic properties within the Downtown East Redevelopment area. Over the years, a number of City redevelopment plans have been approved for these blocks and surrounding areas.

III. DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS FOR PROJECT SITES

The recommended development program for each project site reflects the development program principles established by this study. It is clear that each project site could be developed under a number of development options depending on market conditions and the economic objectives of the developer involved. The proposed individual project plans, when taken as a whole, represent a conceptual comprehensive development approach for the study area. The overall development plan (Map 5) and perspective rendering (Map 4) provide a comprehensive view on the development strategy as it might be implemented over time. The development approaches for each of the Project Sites are depicted on illustrative project plans. (Maps 7,8,9,10,11 and 12)

Although no formal market demand analysis was performed, discussions with property owners, city staff, and developers familiar with the market area and on-site analysis and inspection yielded a general development strategy for the study area. The following section summarizes the study's primary recommendations for urban form/design, land use and development program for each project site.

A. Project Site One - Block A (Map 9)

This site is a wholly City-owned site located on the east side of the City Market property. This block has more long-term prospects as an attractive site for a mix of retail and residential uses as more permanent parking facilities are developed to support the area. In the short-term, the frontage on E. Davie Street provides an opportunity to energize this street section with street level activity supportive of the goal as making E. Davie Street an attractive pedestrian linkage. The property currently supports a viable City parking lot. The Farmers Market is a tenant of the building adjacent to E. Davie Street.

The proposed development program envisions a three-story residential building facing E. Davie Street at the S. Person Street intersection. Some accommodation with

the existing Farmer's Market building space would need to be resolved. Surface parking for residents would be provided immediately north of the building with access from S. Person Street. The limited depth, proximity to heavily traveled S. Person Street and the adjacent institutional setting of the Moore Square Magnet Middle School makes this portion of the site a challenge for residential development.

Future use of the site could possibly include street level storefront retail along S. Person Street with parking support in the rear and from several nearby existing and proposed parking facilities. Any future development of this site should address alternative parking resources for the displacement of public surface parking. The existing pedestrian linkages between Moore Square and S. Person Street is a strong element in the connectivity of the City Market and should be preserved in any development plans for this project site.

Block A • Program 0.89 AC (E. Martin, S. Person and E. Davie Streets)

Residential Flats	22 Units	City Parking Lot	25 DU/AC
Retail Storefronts	9000 SF		

B. Project Site Two - Block B (Map 8)

This site is entirely privately owned and is now in use as a surface parking lot and for commercial use. Its direct proximity to the Progress Energy complex and the Founders Row Condominiums, and its size and configuration, makes the site a strategic location for residential development opportunities. Development may need to be deferred to avoid moving too far ahead of market demand.

This block is different than others in that it would be outside normal Community Development Department housing initiatives. As such, development would be by the private sector with support by typical City incentives such as rezoning support and infrastructure development.

The proposed development program envisions two high-density residential buildings facing S. Blount Street and S. Person Street. The building on S. Blount Street would be a three-story residential with the opportunity for street level retail storefronts facing S. Blount Street. Surface parking accessed by a new private street on the north side of the property would service the residents and provide an important mid-block connection. A second four or five story residential building with parking below would face S. Person Street and the new private street. A common interior open courtyard area would provide private open space for the residents. Adjacent single-family residential structures along East Cabarrus Street and the Masonic Lodge would be addressed to insure compatibility of design. The existing telecommunications tower would need to be removed from its current location and perhaps be integrated into a more urban downtown area structure.

Block B Program • 2.58 AC (E. Davie, S. Person, E. Cabarrus and S. Blount Streets)

Flats/ Townhomes	48 – 64 Units	50 Spaces Below	29 – 35 DU/AC
Lofts/Efficiencies	26 Units	63 Surface Spaces	
Retail Storefronts	4800 sf		

C. Project Site Three - Block C (Map 9)

Block C represents a full city block bounded by E. Davie Street, S. Person Street, E. Cabarrus Street and S. Bloodworth Street. The block represents a critical physical gap between the potential private developments on Block A and the Carlton Place project on the A-21 site. The key issue with this block is the need to ensure that it does not develop in a manner that underutilizes its considerable potential.

City-owned properties include four single-family residential lots facing S. Bloodworth Street. The remaining block is privately owned, including the Presbyterian Church property.

Two development programs are envisioned for this site, the first being the consolidation of private properties along S. Person Street to be developed as parking to serve the Presbyterian Church. This would be an entirely private initiative, as no City-owned property would be involved. Residents and property owners attending community meetings have indicated that there is also a need for parking to support Moore Square and the Magnet Middle School whose use may be accommodated by agreement between the Church and the public school system. Church leaders have also expressed a need for church building expansion, which may occur to the east of the existing Church building.

The eastern half of the block is now in private ownership by several parties along with single-family lots owned by the City of Raleigh. This portion of Block C has strong potential for medium to high-density residential use. The development program would include a high-density three to four story residential building providing a strong building façade along E. Davie Street. The existing topography would accommodate service retail uses in the lower level of the residential building, at the corner of E. Davie Street and S. Bloodworth Street. Surface parking shared with a second residential structure would service the residents.

The three story residential building would face S. Bloodworth Street and the proposed A-21 (Carlton Place) residential buildings to the east. A two-story townhouse would anchor the corner lot of E. Cabarrus and S. Bloodworth Street as a scale transition to the adjacent single-family homes along the E. Cabarrus Street block frontage. Interior mid-block surface parking would service the residential units.

Block C Program • 1.50 AC (E. Davie, S. Bloodworth, E. Cabarrus and S. Person Streets)

Residential Flats	66 Units	68 Surface Spaces	32 DU/AC
Townhomes	2 Units		
Retail Storefronts	6000 SF		
Presbyterian Church	Expansion	130 Surface Spaces (recombined)	

D. Project Site Four – Block D (Maps 10 and 11)

The Block D development site encompasses the majority of the block surrounded by East Cabarrus, South East, East Davie Streets and Chavis Way. The existing single-family residential lots on the south side of the block facing E. Cabarrus Street are not included in this study area. This block supports active users interested in the recommended development concept. Under one possible development scenario, the existing City-owned warehouse building and the building currently leased to the Rex Senior Health Care Center would be developed into a mix of residential units, a new medical health facility, and a senior housing facility. The improvements under this plan would need to be phased to allow the continued operation of the Rex Senior Health Care Center at its current location.

Phase One would include the demolition of the existing Warehouse and the construction of a residential townhome building facing S.East Street and the construction of the medical health component (possibly with complementary street level tenants) with housing above facing E. Davie Street. Once completed, the existing Rex Senior Health Care building would be demolished and a new senior housing facility constructed at the corner of E. Davie Street and Chavis Way overlooking the Chavis Greenway. Interior mid-block surface parking would service the housing and health facility. A mid-block pedestrian connection and green space would connect the Chavis Greenway west to S. East Street.

Block D Program • 1.3 AC (E. Davie, Chavis Way, E. Cabarrus and S. East Streets)

Phase 1	Residential Flats/Lofts	20 Units	68 Surface Spaces	18 DU/AC
	Townhomes/Sr.Ctr.	4 Units		
	Medical Facility	14,000 SF		
Phase 2	Senior Housing	38 Units		

E. Project Site Five – Block E(Map 12)

Block E encompasses portion of three blocks facing E. Cabarrus Street between E. Bloodworth and S. East Streets. The City of Raleigh owns a number of parcels in this area which, when aggregated, would allow for City initiated development to occur adjacent to privately owned property. Located in the southeast quadrant of the study

area, the development approach adheres to the goal of transitioning building mass, size and residential density more in keeping with the adjacent single-family dwelling.

The primary block bounded by E. Cabarrus, S. East, E. Lenoir, and S. Bloodworth Streets envisions a development program of smaller, incrementally developed housing using a combination of townhome style housing at the corner of S. East and E. Cabarrus Streets. Of all the study area buildings, Block E has the most potential for Community Development initiated housing initiatives. The overall Community Development funding opportunities available affects such initiatives. Any housing development efforts may be affected or governed by Shaw University's long-term vision. Infill with the "big-house" style townhome residences would occur fronting S. East, E. Lenoir and S. Bloodworth Streets keeping existing single-family residential structures intact. Interior mid-block surface parking would service the residences.

Two conventional townhome developments are viewed as the most appropriate development responses to small City-owned sites at both the southwest corner of E. Cabarrus and S. Bloodworth and the northeast corner of S. East and E. Lenoir Streets. The city owned property at the southeast corner of E. Cabarrus and S. East Streets would be dedicated as open space with potential as a naturalized open space or greenway connection. This property would be very difficult to develop for residential purposes and currently supports trees and natural areas around a deep ravine with a small stream.

Block E Program • 2.95 AC (E. Cabarrus, S. East, E. Lenoir and S. Bloodworth Street)

Townhomes	15 Units	43 Surface Spaces	9 DU/AC
Townhomes	12 Units		

IV. OVERALL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The development strategy for this area should focus on the re-establishment of a viable residential neighborhood, using a variety of market rate and affordable residential options along with service retail and institutional uses. The area offers opportunities for a more densely built residential structures, locations for service retail storefronts, establishment of a reinvigorated E. Davie Street, and a network of safe urban open spaces. The Moore Square South study area offers the potential of between 250 and 300 residential units and approximately 30,000 square feet of retail/office uses.

Implementation of this vision will require that common design and program parameters be woven into the overall plan for the area. In evaluating and preparing development approaches for individual project sites, the following approaches should be taken into account:

Strengthening the Moore Square South Neighborhood

- Provide housing opportunities in a variety of building forms, densities and price range as the preferred development program. Selective retail and institutional uses should be integrated at appropriate locations.(Map 6)
- Provide safe, serviceable and ample parking for uses associated with the development projects.
- Urban open space in the form of courtyards, streetscapes and small parks should be incorporated into the overall development plans to promote strong pedestrian linkages. (Map 13)

Linking Neighborhoods To The Downtown Core

- Establish E. Davie Street as a strong physical and visual linkage between the residential neighborhood southeast of Chavis Greenway and the Downtown Core. Align business and institutional uses along E. Davie Street and plan for wholesale streetscape improvements along E. Davie Street from Fayetteville Street to Chavis Way.
- Building scale and residential densities should generally be greater adjacent to the Progress Energy building complex along Blount Street and decrease in scale and density toward the single-family neighborhoods around Chavis Way and E. Lenoir Street.
- Build on the opportunities presented by other City, institutional, and private sector initiatives including Progress Energy Complex, Exploris Museum, Moore Square Magnet Middle School, the Livable Streets Initiative, Rex Senior Health Care Center, Chavis Greenway, Carlton Place and others.

Implementation

There are a number of factors to consider in determining the most effective implementation approach for any development effort in the study area. Most of these factors, including ownership, potential partnerships, land availability, adjacent development, funding and market demand are all difficult to accurately project over time. However, taken on an incremental project-by-project basis, there is a basis for evaluating project sites for timing and priority for phased implementation.

Some City-owned parcels may be successfully developed as singular projects. However, most of the City-owned properties will be better developed in conjunction with privately held properties. This approach will allow the City or others to assemble, sell or joint venture development projects at a scale that will allow for more creative and market-oriented projects to be envisioned and accomplished. The City of Raleigh may also invest in additional strategically located properties to stimulate development in the study area while promoting an overall development strategy for the area.

DRAFT

MOORE SQUARE SOUTH DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY REPORT

September 13, 2004

Page 9 of 11

This report offers two complementary strategies which, when considered collectively, will form the basis for an overall vision and development strategy for the seven block area. Immediate implementation of all the elements will not be required for the overall strategy to be successful. Elements of each strategy may be implemented incrementally and concurrently.

Strengthening the Moore Square South Neighborhood

A first strategy component involves strengthening the Moore Square South Neighborhood by focusing on housing opportunities in the areas south of E. Davie Street. Options in this area should reflect the transition into the existing single-family East Raleigh neighborhoods and Shaw University.

Again, the Carlton Place mixed-use project provides an opportunity for short-term implementation by providing affordable and market rate housing fronting S. Bloodworth and S. East Streets. City support for this effort would pay immediate dividends by serving as a catalyst for development in the surrounding blocks.

The city-owned and unimproved lots in Block E provide a second short term opportunity to support the development vision for this area. The smaller residential buildings proposed for Block E would provide the Community Development Department with an opportunity to involve small builders and developers in the development process.

In the long term, the City should seek ways to facilitate a joint public/private venture or private sector development of Block C along S. Bloodworth Street for attached housing. Housing along S. Bloodworth Street would be a particularly beneficial contribution to the long-term success of Carlton Place.

Longer term elements would include public incentives in support of private sector housing on privately owned Block B, including consideration for development approvals. Priority should be given the development of residential lofts and retail storefronts facing the proposed Progress Energy residential project along S. Blount Street.

Linking Neighborhoods to the Downtown Core

The second strategy component is to link the neighborhoods to the Downtown Core. This initiative would encompass the portions of Blocks A, C and D which front on E. Davie Street. If implemented, the residential program, retail storefront and, Rex Health Care Center for these blocks can build on the strength of previous City, private sector and institutional initiatives along E. Davie Street to form the foundation for an enlivened city corridor linking the Downtown Core with Chavis Way.

There are three short-term opportunities available to the City to initiate this effort. The first element would be to provide strong City support for the Carlton Place mixed-use development currently planned for the city-owned A-21 site. If phased, an effort should be made to give priority to buildings facing E. Davie Street. Block D presents an

DRAFT

MOORE SQUARE SOUTH DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY REPORT

September 13, 2004

Page 10 of 11

opportunity for the Community Development Department to package a request for proposals for the private and non-profit developers to consider the development of the warehouse site for a mix of residential units, senior housing and an expanded community health facility. A third early element would be a commitment by the City to allocate funding for the design and implementation of a reinvigorated public streetscape along E. Davie Street from Fayetteville Street to Chavis Way.

Longer term elements would include City efforts to facilitate an initiative by property owners in Block C to expand shared surface parking facilities to support use by the Museum Magnet Middle School and Davie Street Presbyterian Church. The City-owned surface parking lot east of the City Market presents a long-term opportunity to further enhance E. Davie Street with the development of a residential and retail storefront building while maintaining interim public parking. The City should also seek to facilitate private development in Block C of an attached residential building with service retail storefront along the south frontage of E. Davie Street.

Future evaluation of these project sites should be undertaken concurrently with a more comprehensive study of the near and long-term development potential of the broader Downtown East area. Other planning efforts being pursued by the City of Raleigh in the near future that will have a direct or indirect impact on the development of this study area include the following:

Martin/Haywood Development Strategy

The Martin/Haywood area is another area of City-acquired property one block east of the Moore Square South area for which there are efforts under way to develop a plan of action. This study area includes a primarily residential area bounded by Swain, East Hargett, East Lenoir, and Camden/Alston Streets. Several properties have been acquired by Community Development over several years. Some properties have been demolished, others rehabilitated. There are new affordable units and existing commercial properties. A plan will be developed in Fall 2004, involving area stakeholders, to help Community Development derive the most appropriate reuse of these properties.

Downtown East Vision

City staff recognizes the need for a broad, citizen-driven vision for the neighborhoods east of downtown (including Moore Square South, Martin/Haywood, and other areas) to guide development over the next twenty years. This area includes two Redevelopment Areas with Redevelopment Plans that will expire in a couple of years and the Chavis Heights public housing complex that will be transformed by the Raleigh Housing Authority using federal HOPE VI funds. The development of the vision will include the participation of Citizen Advisory Councils, the Southeast Raleigh Assembly, RHA, and other stakeholders.

V. ACTION ITEMS

The following action items are recommended.

- A. Endorse the proposed development strategy outlined in this report.
- B. Pursue strategies to implement a Streetscape Improvements Plan for E. Davie Street from Fayetteville Street to Chavis Way.
- C. Support the implementation of the Carlton Place residential tax-credit project on the City-owned A-21 tract.
- D. Support an initiative by the Community Development Department to seek to develop Block D, which may include new opportunities in support of the Rex Senior Health Care Center.
- E. Endorse and support efforts by City staff and community leaders to create an overall plan and vision for growth and development in the Downtown East area.
- F. Initiate a more complete development assessment supported by a detailed residential market study to determine the preferred prioritization and timing of the specific development proposals included in this study.

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